



Winner of 9, 2015 National Native Media Awards

April 1, 2016 "Tasahce Rakko" Big Spring
Vol. 46, Issue 7

Ongoing MCN cabinet member coverage — Pages 8-9
Picking wild onions — Page 12



A Mvskoke Media production - The official tribal newspaper of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation

MUSCOGEE NATION NEWS

Bill would change construction-reporting requirements on cultural properties



MNN File Photo

Proposed law would remove requirement to notify MCN

Jessica McBride
Media Coordinator

OKMULGEE, Okla. — A proposed Georgia state law would amend the Georgia Environmental Policy Act, regarding construction and improvement of public roads. Senate Bill 346 would

change reporting requirements for construction on culturally pertinent and historic sites, potentially allowing construction on historic, pre-Removal Muscogee (Creek) Nation land without notifying the Nation. MCN Cultural Preservation Department Interim

Manager and Tribal Historic Preservation Officer Raelynn Butler said the office works to protect and preserve MCN culture and history, and the office is doing its best to look after MCN cultural interests in the Southeast.

“We strongly oppose this bill,” Butler said. “This could mean really bad news for Indian Country, especially Southeast tribes that con-

Cultural - 6

Emvpanayv: One who tells the story

Health deficit, Tulsa dam and OKC museum updates, national election

Gary Fife
Radio Specialist

OKMULGEE, Okla. — In local issues, Muscogee (Creek) Nation Principal Chief James Floyd and the National Council are dealing with a huge funding deficit with the MCN Department of Health. Reports indicate Floyd inherited this situation and he is now working on some plans to meet this fiscal challenge. According to financial documents, MCN had purchased costly facilities that

aren't producing the needed revenues. Council representatives said in a recent meeting that they hadn't been supplied with timely or accurate information about these ventures by the previous administration and MCNDH Governing Board. A new draft plan of action indicates major changes in MCNDH operations and personnel could be on the horizon. In national news, it looks like Native Americans aren't particularly high on agendas of the current crop of presidential candidates. Without taking sides, here's some of

Emvpanayv - 5

Council approves legislation to implement VAWA at MCN

Bill allowing community to pursue federal grant passes
Sterling Cosper
MNN Editor

OKMULGEE, Okla. — A regular session of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation National Council was held March 17 at the Mound Building in Okmulgee. The Council addressed the following legislation, the interpretation of which is attributed to language in the bills:

- TR 16-023 confirming

the nomination of Robert Hawkins Jr. to serve as chief of the Lighthouse administration. Reps. Mark Randolph, Dode Barnett, Rufus Scott and Thomas Yahola sponsored the resolution, which was postponed indefinitely 11-4 with Reps. Joyce Deere, Adam Jones, Barnett and Yahola voting against the motion.

Tribal law requires legislative confirmation for this position and MCN Principal Chief James Floyd nom-

Council - 7



Sterling Cosper_Stock art

The Muscogee (Creek) Nation National Council passed a resolution approving a \$65.68 million loan to address the reported financial deficit at the MCN Health Department during a March 21 extraordinary session at the Mound Building in Okmulgee, Okla.

\$65.8 million loan approved to address reported Health deficit

Principal chief, Council discuss department budget issue, strategy

Jessica McBride
Media Coordinator

OKMULGEE, Okla. — A Muscogee (Creek) Nation National Council extraordinary session was held March 21 at the Mound Building in Okmulgee to address the reported budget deficit at the MCN Department of Health. The Council considered TR 16-045 substitute legislation, authorizing the Nation to obtain a loan management account from the Bank of America-Merrill Lynch in the amount of \$65,680,000 to be used toward restoring funds

for MCNDH operations and re-align the department to operate more efficiently. The resolution passed 14-1, with Rep. James Jennings voting against it. The 'Muscogee Nation News' contacted Jennings March 22 for a comment and did not receive a response as of press time. At the session, Jennings said the Council did not have all of the information in order to make decisions previously. “I appreciate what you're doing working, trying to get this situation solved. You inherited this. This is not something that's come through your administration,” he

said. “But, since I've been on the Council, I served on the HEW (Health, Education and Welfare) committee every year. And I just feel like that we've been left in the dark here.” Other comments made during the meeting indicated responsibility on the previous administration. The 'MNN' reached out to former MCN Principal Chief George Tiger for comment and he voiced intention to touch base on the issue March 28 after gathering information. The 'MNN' also reached out to former MCN Secretary of Health Seneca Smith and

Deficit - 4

Council's HEW Committee passes legislation regarding Citizenship Office



MNN File Photo_Stock art

Legislation would create new citizenship cards to serve as passports

Jessica McBride
Media Coordinator

OKMULGEE, Okla. — The Muscogee (Creek) Nation Citizenship Office discussed three pieces of legislation March 7 during the MCN National Council Health, Educa-

tion and Welfare Committee. The full Council addressed the legislation at a regular session March 19 at the Mound Building in Okmulgee.

Passport cards

TR 16-026 would approve a memorandum of understanding between MCN and

Citizenship - 6

ATTENTION

Mvskoke Media staff are switching email addresses. Please see our updated information on page two. Mvto



MCIFB website

Freedmen group seek federal recognition as independent tribe

President explains group background, mission

Sterling Cosp
MNN Editor

OKMULGEE, Okla. — President of the Muscogee (Creek) Indian Freedmen Band Ron Graham said MCIFB sent their first letter requesting federal recognition as an independent tribal nation in 2012.

“We have submitted over 8,000 documents to Washington, D.C., the Department of Interior, the BIA, the Bureau of Indian Affairs,” Graham said. “So we’re looking forward to see what they’re doing and how they’re going to go about doing the process.”

Graham said MCIFB is an organization seeking to represent descendants of African-American slaves formerly on the rolls of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation who lost citizenship status shortly after the MCN government was reorganized in 1979, following a national Indian self-determination movement.

“In 1979 when they changed the Constitution but that was the start actually because it was in 1981 when they established the citizenship roll,” Graham said.

Article III, Section 2 of the MCN Constitution in part states, ‘Persons eligible for citizenship in the Muscogee (Creek) Nation shall consist of Muscogee (Creek) Indians by blood whose names appear on the final rolls as provided

by the Act of April 26, 1906 (34 Stat. 137), and persons who are lineal descendants of those...’

“It states that you have to have a listed blood quantum to become a citizen of the Creek Nation,” Graham said. “That was one part and the other part is that you have to be listed on the Dawes Commission Roll and the Freedmen are. But what separates us is that we don’t have a listed blood quantum on our card.”

He said the commission was undiscerning on which roll they chose for citizens.

“Some were placed on the blood roll and some were placed on the Freedmen Roll, even though they had the same mother and father,” he said.

Before this, Graham said the Treaty of 1866 made between MCN and the U.S. government following the Civil War, enrolled former slaves of tribal citizens as citizens themselves.

“I start with the treaty of 1866 and the Dawes Commission, which started in 1898,” he said. “There is a fine area between 1866 and 1898 where everyone in the Creek Nation were full members.”

According to a previous ‘Muscogee Nation News’ interview, Graham sought Muscogee (Creek) citizenship status through a 2005 MCN District Court case and won but it was dismissed by the MCN Supreme Court after an appeal was filed by the MCN Citizenship Board.

“Some of us have tried that

avenue, myself personally,” he said. “And we don’t want to get into the same thing the Cherokee Nation, this day are going through.”

Graham said the other Five Civilized Tribes have Freedmen and similar treaties from 1866 and while the Seminole Nation has retained their Freedmen citizens, others like MCN and the Cherokee Nation have passed tribal laws that removed them.

According to the National Museum of the American Indian website, ‘Some descendants of the Cherokee freedmen have filed a lawsuit to regain tribal citizenship. They claim the 2007 amendment to the Cherokee tribal constitution ignores history and violates the treaty of 1866.’

“For the most part, since the Cherokee Nation suit is still in Washington, D.C., they cannot back away from it,” Graham said. “The ones I’ve talked to, I’m not speaking for everyone but the ones I’ve talked to are waiting on this Cherokee Nation decision that’s been out for about two years.”

Graham reiterated that this is not the case with MCIFB.

“We decided to do this, go this route trying to get our tribe because we don’t want the problems that exist with other tribes and we don’t want the problem once we get in, are they going to kick us out again,” he said.

Graham clarified that he could only speak for MCIFB.

“I’m just talking for the people who are members of our association,” he said. “Now I can’t speak for all Creek Freedmen descendants.”

If they receive recognition, Graham said the group would be a democracy and seek to provide services.

“We would take a vote on how we would want things ran,” he said. “We would start from ground zero and build it up such as housing, health care, education.”

He addressed the potential of competing for resources with other tribes.

“Well we just want what’s ours period,” Graham said. “We want our pot and what’s in the pot and that’s it. No more. No less.”

Graham acknowledged the sovereignty of other tribes that could be affected by his mission and said federal involvement is a moral matter.

“We totally, 100 percent believe in sovereignty but we believe once you cross over someone else’s injustice, someone else should step in and see what is going on,” he said.

MCN National Council Rep. Darrell Proctor, who is chairman of the Land, Natural Resources and Cultural Preservation Committee, said he would have to know more about the matter before commenting on their quest for federal recognition and LNC member Rep. Del Beaver shared a similar sentiment.

While waiting on recognition, Graham said his focus is on providing education about the Creek Freedmen through avenues such as his Feb. 18 presentation at the College of the Muscogee Nation in Okmulgee.

“I teach about the land that was given to us, 160 acres, Graham said. “Each citizen, new born, minor, if you were full blood, if you were freedmen, you received 160 acres so that’s what I try to instill and to teach about the Freedmen.”

He said the Freedmen were active in the tribe.

“They were judges. They were attorneys. They were tribal legislators. They were in the House of Kings, House of Warriors,” Graham said. “They were doctors, teachers. They were Lighthorse Police and of course, they were loyal citizens.”

Graham said a common question he receives is about the potential for genetic testing to help his cause.

“People ask me all the time about my DNA. It has nothing to do with DNA,” he said. “It has everything to do with documentation.”

For more information about MCIFB visit: www.1866creekfreedmen.com.

Listen to ‘Mvskoke Radio’ coverage: <http://tinyurl.com/zysycqn>.

View ‘Native News Today’ coverage: <http://tinyurl.com/zhjnsbp>.

The Civil War ripped Creek Nation: part 2

Don Diehl/Non-Citizen

SAPULPA, Okla. — The Yuchi camps of Creek County were also considered part of the Creek Nation. It is not clear what the attitudes of their leaders were toward the conflict. Interestingly, African American slaves and Freedmen also joined the exodus in hope of relocating in the north.

Local Indians had few choices and neutrality was not one of them. Most joined the Confederacy. Those remaining loyal to the Union sought refuge in Kansas, hideouts or less impacted areas along the Texas border.

It was on Tuesday, Nov. 19, 1861 when the Civil War officially began in Oklahoma. Opothleyahola’s column of nearly 1,700 men had been on the lookout for pursuing Confederates. They, along with women and children were traveling in wagons, on horseback and by foot carrying as many of their possessions as possible.

They were being pursued by Col. Douglas H. Cooper, whose Confederate command of approximately 1,300 troops consisted of Texas cavalry, Choctaw and Chickasaw mounted riflemen, a Creek regiment and Seminole warriors.

Cooper, a former Indian agent, had orders to, “take measures to secure the protection of these tribes in their present country from the agrarian rapacity of the North.”

Confrontation began when Confederate outriders were surprised by Opothleyahola’s scouts north of the Red Fork. The Confederates executed a fighting retreat and awaited reinforcements. The two sides battled before darkness. A prairie fire reportedly set by Opothleyahola’s men concluded the initial engagement, according to accounts.

To be continued...

See part 1 in the March 15 edition for source material and information about the author.

MUSCOGEE NATION NEWS

STAFF

- | | |
|---|---|
| INTERIM MANAGER
JASON SALSAMAN
jsalsman@mvskokemedia.com | EDITOR
STERLING COSPER
scosper@mvskokemedia.com |
| MEDIA COORDINATOR
JESSICA MCBRIDE
jmcbride@mvskokemedia.com | MEDIA SPECIALIST
AMANDA RUTLAND
arutland@mvskokemedia.com |
| PROJECT SPECIALIST
CHELSIE RICH
crich@mvskokemedia.com | RADIO SPECIALIST
GARY FIFE
gfife@mvskokemedia.com |
| REPORTER
DARREN DELAUNE
ddelaune@mvskokemedia.com | CIRCULATION
WILMA MURPHY
wmurphy@mvskokemedia.com |



THE **MUSCOGEE NATION NEWS** IS THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE MUSCOGEE (CREEK) NATION. ITS PURPOSE IS TO MEET THE NEEDS OF THE TRIBE AND ITS CITIZENS THROUGH THE DISSEMINATION OF INFORMATION. REPRINT PERMISSION IS GRANTED WITH CREDIT TO THE **MUSCOGEE NATION NEWS** UNLESS OTHER COPYRIGHTS ARE SHOWN.

EDITORIAL STATEMENTS APPEARING IN THE **MUSCOGEE NATION NEWS**, GUEST COLUMNS AND READERS’ LETTERS REFLECT THE OPINION OF THE INDIVIDUAL WRITER AND NOT THOSE OF THE **MUSCOGEE NATION NEWS**, ITS ADVISORS OR THE TRIBAL ADMINISTRATION AND ARE SUBJECT TO EDITORIAL DISCRETION.

EDITORIALS AND LETTERS MUST BE SIGNED BY THE INDIVIDUAL WRITER AND INCLUDE A TRACEABLE ADDRESS OR PHONE NUMBER TO BE CONSIDERED FOR PUBLICATION.

PLEASE CONTACT OUR OFFICE FOR DEADLINE OF SUBMISSIONS TO BE CONSIDERED FOR INCLUSION. THE **MUSCOGEE NATION NEWS** RESERVES THE RIGHT TO EDIT ALL SUBMISSIONS FOR SPACE, STYLE AND GRAMMAR. RECEIPT OF SUBMISSIONS DOES NOT OBLIGATE THE **MUSCOGEE NATION NEWS** IN ANY REGARD.

THE **MUSCOGEE NATION NEWS** IS MAILED FROM STIGLER, OKLA., TO ALL ENROLLED MUSCOGEE (CREEK) CITIZENS’ HOUSEHOLDS UPON REQUEST. INQUIRIES SHOULD BE DIRECTED TO MYSKOKE MEDIA. PLEASE INCLUDE YOUR TRIBAL ENROLLMENT NUMBER OR LAST FOUR DIGITS OF YOUR SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER ACCOMPANIED BY YOUR DATE OF BIRTH WITH ALL CORRESPONDENCE.

TO SUBMIT A CHANGE OF ADDRESS OR A LETTER TO THE EDITOR, CALL: 918 - 732 - 7720 OR E-MAIL: WMURPHY@MVSOKEMEDIA.COM.

LIKE THE MNN ON FACEBOOK:
WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/MUSCOGEENATIONNEWS



FOLLOW THE MNN ON TWITTER: @THE_MNN



MEMBERS OF THE NATIVE AMERICAN JOURNALISTS ASSOCIATION

Bill proposed to provide insurance for autism therapies



American Psychological Association website

Muscogee (Creek) family supports legislation

Jessica McBride
Media Coordinator

OKMULGEE, Okla. — On a typical day, a Muscogee (Creek) family of three young boys play outside with their dog. The oldest enjoys football, the youngest has a fascination with dinosaurs.

The four-year-old middle child loves trains. He was diagnosed with autism in November 2015.

Their mother, a Muscogee (Creek) Nation employee who wished to remain anonymous for privacy reasons, has been searching for any type of service or therapy that might be available to her son since his diagnosis.

Between the ages of two and three, his parents began to notice that his language skills had stopped developing and other developmental delays.

They were referred to the University of Oklahoma Health Science Center’s Child Studies Center and were recommended to pursue applied behavior analysis (ABA) therapy.

According to www.autismspeaks.org, ABA focuses on reinforcing desired principles to bring about positive behavior changes. The techniques can be used in structured classroom settings as well as everyday settings in the home.

Most of the therapy is one-on-one between the therapist and client, and features a customized curriculum based upon the client’s needs.

Some clients are referred for intensive ABA programs that involve 25-40 hour a week therapy sessions for several years.

However, the family hit a barrier in receiving the recommended treatment.

“Because Oklahoma as a state does not have a bill that requires insurance companies to cover the evidence-based applied behavioral analysis therapy, then our insurance does not cover that,” the mother said.

She went through two months of dialogue with the insurance company, gathering documents.

The situation was referred for a medical peer review, where the services were finally denied.

The family had a consultation for the ABA therapy to see what type of services

they could provide for their son. The price tag given was around \$8,000 per month.

“And so it was obviously not an option to private pay out of our pocket,” the mother said. “And so, that’s where families are stuck in that if insurance isn’t going to come in and assist, then parents are just, any middle class family, even upper middle class would have a difficult time budgeting that.”

Autism and its effects

The advocacy group Autism Speaks defines autism, or autism spectrum disorder as a complex brain development disorder.

“It’s a very challenging disability. Children with autism, they often have delays in communication. That’s kind of one of those core areas that you see,” OU Health Science Center Associate Professor and Oklahoma Autism Center Director Dr. Bonnie McBride said.

She expanded on the challenges.

“And they have these social delays, social communication delays... all of these things that are all really core building block skills that you need for learning other things later in life, they’re not learning because they’re not paying attention to those things often in their environment and they’re not understanding they’re important things to pay attention to,” McBride said.

McBride is also a board certified behavior analyst and has worked with autism spectrum disorders for over 25 years.

She explained that toddlers with autism commonly do not learn from their social environment like a child that is typical in development such as understanding facial expressions, exploring, playing and communicating.

She said children with autism are disadvantaged because the disorder causes them to fall further behind children of the same age.

“Kids with autism often have a lot of challenging behaviors, behaviors that adults find challenging because they may be disruptive. They may in some instances, they may harm themselves or others,” McBride said. “And a lot of that stems from frustration about not being able to communicate, get your needs met and get people to understand what it is you want.”

She said families often suffer and are isolated because

public outings become very difficult.

“You have this child that looks very typical. You can’t look at a child with autism and say, ‘That child has autism,’ but yet they behave very differently than other children,” McBride said.

She explained how this affects the handing of behavioral issues.

“So a lot of times parents will take their children out in public and people will say, ‘Well, why don’t you control your child better? You need to discipline them.’

“They don’t understand that disciplining them in a traditional way is not going to work. They don’t understand that all you’re doing is just often times making it worse because it’s just upsetting the child more,” McBride said.

She said some parents quit their jobs to take care of their children because childcare centers are sometimes unable to handle children with autism.

Support for change

Ashley Dawson’s son was diagnosed with autism three years ago. He is now six-years-old.

Dawson is an Autism Oklahoma administrative leader and facilitates parent support groups. She is also on the PieceWalk fundraising committee.

Autism Oklahoma is a grassroots support network that provides support groups for parents of those on the autism spectrum as well as these individuals themselves.

The PieceWalk is an Oklahoma group that offers support and facilitates an awareness day in May.

Since the family’s health insurance did not cover ABA therapy, they sought speech and occupational therapy for their son.

Dawson said it initially helped, but they stopped seeing results after a year.

“My husband and I decided at that point that ABA had to happen,” Dawson said. “We didn’t know how we were going to do it, but we knew we had to do it.”

Their son had a college fund provided by his grandparent that the entire family decided to utilize to cover costs.

Therapists recommended that Dawson’s son attend therapy for 40 hours per week to target underlying issues. She decided on a plan for 15 hours per week based on what they could afford.

Soon after ABA therapy started, Dawson began to see results with her son. He utilized an iPad with an application to help communicate his wants and needs with the hope that the application would eventually help him speak.

“To see that huge of a positive change in your child in just a short period of time, we knew we had to keep it going,” she said.

Dawson discontinued therapy Jan. 31 after 18 months, and drained the \$40,000 college fund.

“The only reason that we stopped is because the money’s just not there to do that anymore, but if it was mandated with health insurance, we could still get that up to maybe \$35,000 a year... that would definitely cover enough to keep my child from regressing into those behaviors that they worked so hard, and we worked so hard at home to get out of,” Dawson said.

Since 2001, 43 states, Washington, D.C., and the U.S. Virgin Islands have enacted some form of autism insurance reform laws.

Oklahoma is one of seven states where health insurance companies are not required to cover some form of therapy for autism spectrum disorders.

Oklahoma State Rep. Jason Nelson said the state legislature looked at bills proposed to deal with the issue in 2008. He said it was a partisan and expensive effort.

“And there was not really a willingness by some proponents to look at, ‘How do we help control the cost as it relates to insurance,’ ” Nelson said. “And there was a huge lack of information back then for instance. Back then, Oklahoma would’ve been one of the very first states to have made this type of reform.”

Nelson said Oklahoma can take advantage of looking at other states to mold legislation after.

Nelson thought it was time again to take a look at autism insurance reform for proven therapies.

“Autism is one disorder that really doesn’t have a home. If your child has ADHD (Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder), then that is covered by health insurance,” he said. “There are a lot of other similar disorders that are covered by insurance, but autism simply does not have a home. It’s not really considered a developmental disability.”

Nelson said that autism is not really considered a purely educational or health issue. He said this belief leaves families without access to services for their children, which prohibits them from leading a productive adult life.

Nelson introduced HB 2962, that passed through the House Insurance Committee Feb. 29, with a vote of 6-4.

“I would caution to prepare for the long haul. I don’t know that we get it all the way through this year. I hope we do,” he said. “...If we don’t get the bill through this year,

then of course we’ll continue to work to educate members and come back next year and the year after that until we have sufficiently answered their questions and done what we can to control costs and maintain some level of benefit.”

Nelson said that this proposal is different from the one in 2008 because it is walking a fine bipartisan line in providing services for families while also being sensitive to the rising costs of health insurance.

He expects that many changes will be made to the legislation before it is passed.

A combination of health and education services

At the Oklahoma Autism Center, McBride said they are working with Sooner Start, a state intervention program for young children with developmental disabilities, to provide ABA techniques for one hour a week to toddlers in community childcare centers and mother’s day out programs.

As far as the proposed legislation is concerned, she said anything would be helpful at this point.

“It’s not going to help all of the families by any means, but is a really, really positive start because right now private insurance companies who provide the very services that they’re asking for be provided in our state, they provide it for other families in other states,” McBride said. “I mean, the very same insurance companies.”

She said the legislation impacts families with private insurance, but that there is still a need in the public service sector.

“We could have a really big impact on their future as well by investing in support for schools to be able to improve educational programs for kids with autism,” McBride said. “Again, that takes both having teachers... But we also need professional development for teachers who are already teaching.”

McBride suggested that the issues surrounding autism should be addressed through both the educational and medical disciplines.

“It’s not helpful to try to say it’s one or the other. I think it’s both and we’ve really ignored both for a long time in our state and it’s time we pay attention to it,” she said.

Dawson believes that ignoring evidence-based knowledge is crippling children with autism and leading to problems down the road.

“If you get these children the early intervention that they need before they are so set in some of these ways, the kids they become so routine oriented,” she said.

Dawson explained how this inhibits development.

“It’s so routine based if you don’t kind of interrupt that now when they’re young and still kind of teachable level, it just becomes that much harder later and that’s when they become unemployable,

Native bullying victim rates above national average

Advocate discusses strategies for parents

Jessica McBride
Media Coordinator

OKMULGEE, Okla. — “I’m a little boy with glasses, the one they call the geek. A little girl who never smiles because I have braces on my teeth. And I know how it feels to cry myself to sleep,” are the lyrics to ‘Don’t Laugh At Me’ released in 1998 by artist Mark Wills.

According to the Native Health News Alliance, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention found in 2013 that 21.4 percent of Native American youth reported being bullied at school at least once in the past year.

The CDC reported the national average for the same time period was 19.6 percent.

The same study found that 18 percent of Native American youth reported electronic bullying during a 12-month period. The national average for electronic bullying of youth was 14.8 percent.

Kirk Smalley, an advocate with Stand for the Silent, has made it his mission to stop bullying.

“We actually know of over 55,000 kids that have taken their own lives due to bullying in the last seven years here in America alone,” he said. “And if you do the math, that actually equates to almost one an hour.”

Smalley lost his 11-year-old son Ty to suicide in 2010 in Perkins after he was bullied at school for two years.

“Our baby has been gone for 2,063 days now, and we miss him every second of every single day,” Smalley said.

Smalley believes part of the bullying problem began when the younger generations became desensitized to violence through media.

He referred to ‘South Park,’ an adult cartoon that airs on Comedy Central, where a child named Kenny meets death every episode only to return to life the next show.

“What’s that teaching our kids? He’s back tomorrow. That’s teaching our children that death is not real, that you get to come back tomorrow,” Smalley said. “But you know what? My wife and I can attest to you that death is real and they don’t come back tomorrow.”

Where did my child learn to bully?

“We’re not born to hate. Hatred is something that’s learned. We learn it from the people around us and it can be unlearned,” Smalley said.

Smalley said that most bullies are mimicking behavior they have seen elsewhere.

“They see bullying on TV. They see it in politics. They see it in our sporting events.

They see it in the workplace,” he said. “It surrounds them everywhere they look.”

In an example, Smalley referred to attitudes and behaviors that he found himself guilty of.

“My choice of words wasn’t always child appropriate... I had road rage a lot,” Smalley said. “I spent a lot of time driving to and from work and somebody would pull out in front of me and I would just, I’d invent new words, just light them up.”

He realized that his son was watching this behavior.

Smalley said that he does not think parents intend to pass bullying behavior on to their children.

Why does bullying seem more prevalent than back in the day?

“In my day, if I was being bullied, it happened physically. It was upfront, face-to-face, in person,” Smalley said. “We would go out behind the gym and settle it maybe... they didn’t have the option to at midnight on Saturday night post something online that went viral, that could be seen all over the world by hundreds of thousands of people.”

In today’s time, Smalley said that bullying not only occurs at school, but has also transferred to the technology arena where battles can be fought 24 hours a day, seven days a week, with or without the victim.

He said technology has created the ability to, “ruin someone’s life at the click of a button” by posting an altered photo or defamatory statement to the Internet for the world to see.

Smalley said the common parenting mistake is to remove their child from social media platforms, or take away smartphone privileges.

“That’s not an answer because that’s still out there,” he said. “The other kids, the bullies, the ones that are cyber bullying are still able to do that to this child now and that kid, the victim of it doesn’t have a clue what’s going on.”

One application, or app called After School, allows youth to make anonymous posts.

“It’s just basically an app that they get on and slam people and just hurt each other and hurt others as much as they can,” Smalley said.

He suggested parents look into parental controls such as TeenSafe to monitor their child’s smartphone habits.

Smalley said that the real answer to the bullying issue is to teach the bully about the impact of their words and actions.

Where do I start the conversation?

“A lot of it is, we have lost the ability to communicate with our children too. Most people sit and eat dinner around a television set. We don’t sit at the dinner table

and have a meaningful conversation,” Smalley said.

During one of his trips, Smalley said he encountered a family of five at dinner.

He watched as they all amused themselves with their smartphones instead of conversing and enjoying each other’s company.

Smalley said parents presume they are accomplishing their parental duties by simply asking, ‘How was school?’

“That’s not communicating. Those kids say that, ‘my day was OK,’ or ‘it was fine,’ because they think that’s what you want to hear,” he said. “We have to start learning to ask them real questions.”

What do I say?

In speaking with school counselors during his advocacy tours, he met individuals who could recount vivid bullying images from their childhood that still affect them today.

“That shows that bullying is a life changing event,” Smalley said.

He said that as he was dealing with the bullying of his son, the school would say that bullying was part of a normal childhood.

Earlier in his life, Smalley said he would have agreed that children should toughen up and not let words get to them.

Now, he acknowledges that words can have a tremendous impact on an individual.

When it comes to taking action against bullying, Smalley suggested parents urge their children to speak out against bullying.

“You can be the bully, you can be the victim or you can be a bystander,” he said. “And what we have to do is we have to get those bystanders involved and standing up and helping stop this because there’s more bystanders than there are victims or bullies.”

Smalley said it only takes one bystander to stand up against bullying behavior to empower others to do the same.

He also believes children should learn to respect each individual and to remind others that everyone is somebody.

“We don’t have to like each other,” Smalley said. “We don’t have to like everything about each other but we have to at least allow people to be who they are.”

National No Name Calling Week is Jan. 18-22.

For more information about talking to children about bullying, visit: www.stopbullying.gov.

For more information about Stand for the Silent, visit: www.standforthesilent.org.

To speak with someone about bullying, call Muscogee (Creek) Nation Behavioral Health Services at: 918-224-9307.

DEFICIT

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

did not receive a response as of press time.

The legislation states that purchases at the end of 2013 such as the George Nigh Rehabilitation Center, now known as MCN Rehabilitation Center and the Okmulgee Memorial Hospital, now known as MCN Medical Center caused MCNDH to operate at a deficit since their purchase.

The legislation states MCNDH ended fiscal year 2015 with a \$29 million deficit, and is projected to continue operating in a deficit this year and in the future considering current operational practices and planned expansions.

The legislation states the Council was made aware of the deficit by the executive branch Feb. 18. During a March 15 committee meeting, the MCNDH Governing Board stated they were previously unaware of the deficit.

Rep. Randall Hicks said during the March 21 Council meeting that people need to be held accountable if the legislation was approved.

“I know we all preached accountability... and to me, somebody’s got to be held responsible for this. I mean, I have a hard time accepting that the governing board was not aware of this deficit,” Hicks said.

The legislation states that FY 2015 quarterly reports do not indicate a deficit.

MCN Attorney General Kevin Dellinger provided a written statement regarding involvement in the matter by

his office.

‘The Muscogee (Creek) Nation Office of the Attorney General will continue to monitor and assess the MCNDH Budget Deficit. At this time, we do not have any further comments.’

MCN Principal Chief James Floyd said in a written statement that his office is reviewing options with patients in mind.

‘We are now starting the process of making decisions with an outside Health source to help lead quality/access/cost-saving initiatives. Right now our goal is to ensure the quality health care with our health system.’

Citizens with comments and solutions for the re-alignment of the MCN health system are encouraged to call: 918-756-4333 ext. 271, email: healthbudget@creekhealth.org or send a letter to: MCN Department of Health, Attn: John Beaver, Chief Legislative Officer, P.O. Box 400, Okmulgee, OK 74447.

‘MNN’ will continue to follow the story and will provide in depth coverage of the situation in a later edition.

‘MNN’ requested a copy of the 2015 and 2016 Comprehensive Annual Budget, a copy of MCNDH 2015 end of year financials and quarterly reports since the end of the year on March 7 and has not received the documents as of press time.

‘MNN’ requested a copy of the audit that reportedly led to the MCNDH deficit discovery March 22 and did not receive it as of press time.

AUTISM

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

and that’s when they become adults that don’t ever leave home and don’t ever get to get a higher education past high school or even lower than that,” she said.

Dawson said there is also a need for job training and housing facilities for adults with autism.

The Muscogee (Creek) family is utilizing the 30 minutes per week of speech therapy that their insurance covers.

They pay an extra \$40 per week to increase the session to an hour.

The mother said she justifies the extra expense because of the distance they have to travel to receive the therapy in Broken Arrow.

“HB 2962 would allow him to get the intense services that he needs,” she said. “So it would be life changing for him, meaning that today, he’s not able to do what most four-year-olds can do. But with a year of ABA, he could be close to right on target for his development, which is going to impact the rest of his life. So, it means everything for this to be passed.”

She hopes that one day her son can receive ABA therapy

to help him engage more with his entire family and have friendships and relationships.

Another thought also crossed her mind.

“I’ve read several articles where other parents have relocated because other states are offering this to families,” the mother said. “So it does cross my mind, ‘Should I live here or should I not?’

“Of course I want to live here because this is where my people are from... but it does leave me wondering, ‘What if I was somewhere else?’ ”

According to the Oklahoma State Legislature website, HB 2962 passed in the House March 9 by a 76-20 vote.

For more information about the bill, visit: <http://tinyurl.com/je6r7nd>.

For more information about the Oklahoma Autism Center, visit: www.autismcenterok.org.

For more information about Autism Oklahoma, visit: www.autismoklahoma.org.

The 2016 PieceWalk and 5K will be held May 7 at the Chickasaw Bricktown Ballpark in Oklahoma City. For more information visit: www.pieciwalk.org.

Coming and Going with Joy Harjo

Joy Harjo-Sapulpa
Muscogee (Creek) citizen

TULSA, Okla. — I don't believe we have ever seen such a proliferation of presidential debates, nor such an outrageous slate of candidates representing one party in particular. One presidential candidate, whose name I won't repeat because to repeat it gives him power, leaves a hate wake behind him with nearly every speech he makes. All this makes me wonder about the qualifications for being a leader. What makes a leader has always been pretty much universal, but given the current state of U.S. political affairs, it appears that being a bully, hateful and obnoxious have replaced the standard leadership characteristics that include fairness, wisdom and the ability to listen. There are few legal qualifications for running for president of the United States.

“Leaders are chosen. They do not assert themselves in these positions.”

— Muscogee (Creek) citizen Joy Harjo

You must be a natural born citizen, 35 years-of-age and a U.S. resident for at least 14 years. The unspoken qualification for running is the ability to garner enough financial and political support. When you consider the responsibilities of the presidential role, which is essentially running all internal and external affairs for a world power, then the lack of qualifications required is nothing less than astounding. What makes for an honorable and wise leader includes these character traits: Humility/Eyasketv: We help each other. No one is above anyone else. Integrity/Fvtcstv: We take responsibility. Community /Emetvl'hvmke: Comunity gain is above personal benefit. Responsibility/Emenhonrvke Tayat: To be loyal and reliable in all things. Wisdom/Hoporrenkv: To listen and pay attention to the wise ones. To continue to keep your ears open more than your mouth. Compassion/Vnoketkv: A great tenderness for living be-

ings and the living being-ness within all life. These traits hold true for our own Muscogee (Creek) Nation, principal chief candidates. The qualifications are also fairly minimal. Each candidate must be at least a one-quarter blood enrolled citizen, 30 years-of-age, reside within the MCN boundaries, be a registered voter for at least six months and carry no felony convictions. (Up until 1973, the U.S. president appointed our principal chiefs. You can imagine how that skewed qualifications.) Candidates running for office in our Nation should be knowledgeable in tribal history, government (including the governments that a chief and contemporary tribal government must deal with such as the workings of area municipalities, the state of Oklahoma and federal govern-

ment) and be at least familiar with our traditional/cultural knowledge and arts. Why not test each candidate for this knowledge? We may even want to consider a change in how we conduct our elections for principal chief or even National Council representatives. In the traditional way, those who know things watch for qualities of leadership in those coming up. Leaders often reveal themselves early in childhood. Others emerge later from the school of hard knocks. Leaders are chosen. They do not assert themselves into these positions. And why not turn to a more traditional manner of assigning leadership? Why not allow the community, those who know, to put forth candidates based on their leadership traits, their commitment to serve the people and their knowledge and abilities? I don't know as much as many others about these things, but I do know this: talking politics or religion can sure get you into trouble. Have a good one.

EMVPANAYV

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

what we could find from taking a quick look at those who are left in the race. Bernie Sanders added a Native advisor, Nicole Willis. He has also hit the subject of Indian health funding. Sanders recently visited the Navajo reservation in Arizona. There are a lot of Navajo and they represent a large voting block. He has visited Indian Country in the Northwest and Iowa where he had warm receptions. The reception was not so warm, however, in Minneapolis, where American Indian Movement leader, Clyde Bellecourt insisted that Sanders answer a question on enforcement of treaty rights. Sanders answered, “The Native American people have gotten a terrible deal from the federal government. I will do everything I can to redress that, absolutely.” Sanders was a co-sponsor of the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA). Hillary Clinton has had Red Lake Minnesota Ojibwe citizen Holly Cook Macarro and Navajo Nation citizen Charles Galbraith as advisors. Her website includes a spot where Natives can, ‘host an event.’ It does show concerns for health, the government-to-government relationship and a number of specific topics high on Native agendas. She also mentions support for VAWA. The only thing on Ted Cruz that I managed to run across was a FAKE news story that said Cruz blamed the flooding in Texas on Native American rain dances. Natives, he said, were mad at the way their issues had been treated in Texas. Remember: FAKE—not real, made up. Donald Trump has had nothing positive to report. Older news story topics include attacks on the racial make-up and casino compe-

tition from the Pequots and competition from the Akwesasne Mohawks. Haven't seen anything on the plus side or much lately at all. Whose casino went bankrupt and whose didn't? The author of the popular Harry Potter books has riled up Native folks with her latest work, ‘Magic in North America.’ Native critics claim J.K. Rowling kind of lumps Native, “witches and wizards” together, borrowing from several tribes’ traditions. ‘One size fits all,’ does not work here Ms. Rowling. OK, ready for the next round of the ‘Museum That Would Not Die?’ According to local news reports, the American Indian Cultural Center and Museum (AICCM) might be completed through a recently announced deal with Oklahoma City, the Chickasaw Nation and the state of Oklahoma. In mid-March, the latest accord would have Oklahoma City finish construction and maintain the place, if the city gets the surrounding land for its own use, whatever that may be. If the city and state can't work out a partnership with the Chickasaws, the agreement is off. That tribe offered to ante up a yet-to-be-determined amount to help get the thing finished. Remember, this whole mess started as a state project. According a AICCM website timeline, ‘In September 1994, the creation of the Native American Cultural & Educational Authority, (NACEA) a State agency, by legislation Title 74, Section 1226. The State appointed the NACEA Board of Directors and the design and planning team was selected.’ OK now, is everything as clear as mud? Speaking of mud, local news agencies report that the Vision Tulsa backers hoped MCN would fund an endowment to cover maintenance costs for two low-water Arkansas River dams proposed in the measure. They listed MCN as stakeholders in the package, citing the River

Spirit Casino expansion and RiverWalk business development along the river. They hope to foster approval from Tulsa and Jenks voters for the April 5 ballot measure. Proposition No. 3, sales tax for economic development, partially reads, ‘The tax is intended to provide for a list of projects agreed upon by city officials that includes two low-water dams in Arkansas River corridor development.’ Not so, said Chief Floyd's office. Maybe later. The new plan is to eliminate one dam from the measure, which was planned for the south Tulsa area. Now, for something on the lighter side. Have you been enjoying the wild onion dinners? It was a busy season of churches and Native civic groups with tafvmpuce dinners as fundraisers. It works for me. It seems like it doesn't matter how early I showed up to pick up a couple of meals, ‘poof,’ there was always a line appearing ahead of me. (Maybe J.K. Rowling did it?) I worried about the sponsors running out of wild onions. A special treat this year was getting wild onions without having to wait in a long line. Our staff shared a lunch at our office and we had wild onions as one of the dishes, courtesy of our own skillet wizard, Jamie Roland (See some thoughts from Rolland regarding this tradition on page 12) and Wilma Murphy provided chicken. Thank you, dears, Mvto Cukpe Hvmken! On top of that, my Ojibwe wife, Ramona, decided to learn to cook them at home. She's more used to cooking wild rice called ‘Mahn-omen,’ but her first attempt with wild onions turned out pretty good. I guess I'll have to find her a big ol' cast-iron skillet and build a fire in the backyard. Kind of nice, not having to wait in line for tafvmpuce. I could get used to that (I hope!) Hvtvm ceh-ecares—I'll see you again.

Graduate profiles due May 13

MNNIMedia Release

OKMULGEE, Okla. — The ‘Muscogee Nation News’ will be featuring 2016 Muscogee (Creek) Nation high school, military, technical school and college graduates in the upcoming June 1 edition of the ‘MNN’. Graduate submissions should include full name of graduate, school, university or technical institution, parents, ceremonial ground and/or church, tribal town, clan and any awards/accom-

plishments (150 total word limit). Profiles will be edited for Associated Press style, structure, grammar, spelling, length and punctuation. A recent digital photo should also be included with graduates’ information, which must be type-written and submitted via email no later than Friday, May 13 by 5 p.m. Submissions should be sent to ‘MNN’ Editor Sterling Cosper at: scosper@mvskokemedia.com. For more information, please call: 918-732-7697. Late submissions will not be accepted.

A MCN Citizen
Owned Business




Integrity Sales

Psalms 25:21

NO CREDIT CHECK ...Easy Payments..

On Portable buildings, Greenhouses and Carports.

www.integritysaleshenryetta.com



Located At 22605 S. Hwy 75
Okmulgee, OK 74447 • Phone: 918-652-1540
Hours: Mon-Fri 10am-5:30pm & Sat 9am-2pm

• Carports
• UTVs
• Zero Turn Mowers

A MCN Citizen
Owned Business




Integrity Sales

Psalms 25:21

NO CREDIT CHECK ...Easy Payments..

On Portable buildings, Greenhouses and Carports.

www.integritysaleshenryetta.com



Located At 22605 S. Hwy 75
Okmulgee, OK 74447 • Phone: 918-652-1540
Hours: Mon-Fri 10am-5:30pm & Sat 9am-2pm

• Carports
• UTVs
• Zero Turn Mowers

CULTURAL

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

sult in the state of Georgia.”

Butler explained that this legislation refers to different projects than those that are federally funded.

“Tribes come into play when it’s a federally funded project and in this referring to state funded transportation projects but from my understanding, the Georgia Department of Transportation has recently received a lot of state funding to carry out their transportation projects,” she said.

Butler said due to a bill that passed last year, the majority of transportation projects in Georgia are state funded instead of federally funded.

“So what that means is the regulations and kind of protection that sacred sites or cultural resources, environmental studies, those kind of get overlooked because that federal funding isn’t involved,” she said.

For state funded projects, Georgia follows the state Environmental Policy Act, which requires environmental or cultural resource assessment to be conducted.

“But what this bill does is in saying that any project that’s under \$100 million no longer has to follow that state requirement,” Butler said.

She said that this bill would leave MCN out of the equation and not allow the Nation to comment on or be made aware of projects that could intersect with tribal towns, burial grounds, sacred places or other culturally relevant sites. MCN has historic interest in the entire state of Georgia. Many sites are undocumented or unknown.

“Sometimes we do get notified about that. It’s called an inadvertent discovery that happens. No one anticipated it happening, but it happens and then the tribes are notified on how to proceed,” Butler said.

She said the Georgia Department of Transportation currently sends MCN notification for state funded projects.

“Generally speaking, Georgia Department of Transportation has been a great federal partner along with the Federal Highways Administration. So, this bill kind of comes as a surprise to us,” Butler said.

In a written statement dated March 8, SB 346 sponsor Sen. Brandon Beach said that the bill does not remove the coverage of historic and burial sites.

‘Because of the commitment and foresight from the General Assembly, Georgia has the ability to invest in transportation infrastructure improvements and repairs across the state. Under existing law, as a part of the approval process, each project is required to comply with six state environmental standards.

‘One of these required standards is defined in the Georgia Abandoned Cemetery and Burial Grounds Act. This covers historical sites used for burial or cemetery purposes.’

Beach also said the bill would save taxpayer money.

‘SB 346 allows the Georgia Department of Transportation the ability to forego an Environmental Effects Report, which consumes tax payer dollars and takes months to compile and approve, if and only if the project that has passed the standards of the six environmental studies currently required by law. This potential exemption would only apply to projects using state funds that cost less than \$100 million. The use of a federal dollar requires following federal environmental regulations.’

Butler estimated that CPD reviewed over 2,000 projects from 12 states in the last year.

MCN is consulted on federal projects through the full states of Alabama, Georgia and portions of Florida, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Mississippi, Arkansas, Texas, Kansas and Oklahoma.

“The majority of our projects come from Alabama and Georgia,” Butler said.

She estimated the department reviewed 70 transportation projects with the Alabama Department of Transportation last year. She estimated the combined number of transportation projects for Alabama and Georgia to be at 200.

Butler said legally, projects that are funded with federal money, federal grants or require a federal permit and will cause ground disturbance require notification be provided to the tribes who were historically in the area.

“I think that we all should be aware of things that happen at Hickory (Ceremonial) Ground and we want to make sure that nothing like that ever happens again,” she said.

“I think that what’s important that we kind of come as a unified front in saying that our voice would no longer be heard to protect.

“We would no longer have the right to protect our cultural resources or environmental resources if this law passes in Georgia.”

Georgia is the home to the federally protected Etowah Indian Mounds, and Ocmulgee National Monument, which has a 1,000-year-old earth lodge.

“We have such precious cultural resources that are non-renewable. Once they’re destroyed or once they’re disturbed, they can’t be replaced,” Butler said. “So if this bill does pass, basically it takes away our right to protect them.”

The ‘Muscogee Nation News’ reached out to MCN Principal Chief James Floyd, MCN National Council Land, Natural Resources and Cultural Preservation Committee Chairperson Darrell Proctor and Georgia State Senator and legislation sponsor Jeff Mullis and did not receive statements by press time.

As of March 22, a substitute version of the bill passed the Georgia House of Representatives. To track legislation signed by Georgia Gov. Nathan Deal visit: <http://tinyurl.com/hmu66tv>.

CITIZENSHIP

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

the U.S. Department of Homeland Security Customs and Border Protection Agency, which regulates the entrance of people into the U.S.

The legislation states that the federal agency would like to include enhanced tribal identification cards on its list of documents citizens can use to gain entrance to the U.S.

MCN Citizenship Office Director Nathan Wilson said the new identification card would act as a passport through the western hemisphere, similar to a U.S. passport card, and not a full passport.

The new card could be utilized by other MCN programs and departments, and would also be compliant with the REAL ID Act.

“Right now Oklahoma is kind of in limbo with the REAL ID Act... Our card right now is able to be used, but with them being in limbo, it could affect that card later on in the future,” Wilson said. “If we do move to this, then we’ll be one step in front of Oklahoma with this new card.”

According to the U.S. Department of Homeland Security website the REAL ID Act, ‘enacted the 9/11 Commission’s recommendation that the Federal Government, “set standards for the issuance of sources of identification, such as driver’s licenses.”’

The Act established minimum security standards for state-issued driver’s licenses and identification cards and prohibits federal agencies from accepting for official purposes licenses and identification cards from states that do not meet these standards.

‘States have made considerable progress in meeting this key recommendation of the 9/11 Commission and every state has a more secure driver’s license today than before the passage of the Act.’

The application for the new MCN citizenship card will require an in-person interview, and be an option for citizens as a secondary citizenship identification card for tribal services.

Wilson said the new card will not be mandatory initially, but that they would like to work with the Council and executive branch to make it mandatory.

“We want to but I think looking at trying to make that happen, just for instance our card that we have currently that we started in 2013, we don’t even have half of the citizens that even switched over to that new card yet,” he said.

If the legislation is approved, Wilson said MCN will be the first tribe in Oklahoma to offer a citizenship card that is also a passport card.

He also said it would help save the Nation money.

“This is just going to benefit the tribe,” Wilson said. “I think it will save us money in the long run because we provide services to these citizens and we remove people on a monthly basis and some of these people might still be getting money and they’re removed.”

MCN Citizenship Board Chairman Nelson Harjo said that approving the passport card legislation could be the first step to a full passport.

“We get something of this nature in place then maybe one day should that open up for us, then we could apply to have our card, Creek Nation’s card, your tribal membership card, it’ll be just a regular passport that will take you throughout the world,” he said.

The legislation passed with a vote of 4-0 during the HEW committee session.

The resolution passed with a vote of 15-0 during the Council regular session.

In a 2010 ‘New York Times’ article, the Iroquois national lacrosse team was denied entry to the United Kingdom using their tribal passports for the world lacrosse championship.

British officials stated that they would not accept the tribal documents because of security concerns. They asked the U.S. to vouch for the tribal passports, which the U.S. refused to do.

Special appropriation

NCA 16-040 would approve an \$89,195 special appropriation to the Citizenship Office to fund two new positions for the remainder of fiscal year 2016.

Wilson said it goes hand-in-hand with the other bills because the funding would pay salaries for an additional information technology position and a marketing position.

“With us having two different offices now, so it’s kind of putting that along with a new card, it’s going to be a lot,” he said.

The IT position would help establish a firewall and secure system to comply with standards for issuing passport cards.

The other employee would be to market and sell the new database.

“The current database that we have now, we have two tribes that are interested in... So we’re wanting to start marketing and try to sell this database so we can supplement some of our budget without coming to Council and asking for that,” Wilson said.

He said they have applied for a grant to assist in the expenses of the database and costs associated with issuing passport cards.

Wilson said if they receive the grant, they can only utilize three percent of those funds for salaries.

The majority of the funds must go towards things such as equipment.

He said that the marketing employee will also help market their Jenks office as well as this service.

Wilson said the office expects to meet the grant application deadline in April. He said they will know if they are to receive grant funds in summer 2016, and then receive the funds by the end of the year.

The legislation passed 3-1 at the HEW committee session, with Rep. James Jennings voting against it.

The appropriation was postponed indefinitely at the March 17 Council regular session.

During the session, the bill’s sponsor Rep. Dode Barnett asked Wilson if his office could do without the appropriation citing MCN financial issues and encouraged him to use their plan to sell the database to cover this expense.

Wilson agreed to continue without additional funding.

Verifying death records

TR 16-034 would approve an agreement with the U.S. Department of Commerce National Technical Information Service.

The agreement would allow the MCN Citizenship Office access to the current and updated Social Security Death Index, and allow them to remove deceased Muscogee (Creek) citizens from the database.

“We do work through the Social Services Office for burial assistance and get it through that way, but a lot of our people they live out of state and stuff like that so this is a way to update our record to make sure that we have a good and active count when it comes to deceased people,” Wilson said.

He said that they will share the information with the MCN Election Board.

“We do send a list to the Election Board every time we relinquish or remove and stuff like that,” Wilson said. “So, we do communicate with them and send the list out to them.”

The legislation passed 4-0 at the HEW committee session, and passed with a vote of 15-0 at the Council regular session.

Citizens can listen to the archived audio of committee meetings by going to the National Council website at: www.mcnnc.com.

To listen to the HEW Committee meeting from March 7, visit: www.mcnnc.com/index.php/archived-committee-meetings, and select play under the file name 030716_hew.

Full copies of the legislation can be viewed by going to the Council’s website, selecting ‘Download Agenda’ in the menu and selecting the agenda on which the legislation was discussed.

Download the pdf file to the computer and open the file using Adobe Acrobat Reader.

For more information regarding proposed legislation, call the National Council at: 918-758-1410.

Bio for MCN Secretary of the Interior Christopher Azbell



Okmulgee Main Street website

Christopher Azbell
Muscogee (Creek) citizen

OKMULGEE, Okla. — Christopher Allen Azbell graduated from Tecumseh High School in 1996 and attended Oklahoma State University in Stillwater where he received a bachelor of science in environmental science in 2001.

After working for a year with the Oklahoma Conservation Commission – Water Quality Division, Azbell returned to OSU to pursue a post-graduate degree in political science with an emphasis in public administration and public policy.

During his post-graduate studies, Azbell interned with the Muscogee (Creek) Nation District Court and shortly thereafter was hired as the administrator of special projects.

During this tenure with the court, Azbell wrote and was awarded several grants including the Tribal Courts Assistance Grant and the Tribal Child Support Enforcement Grant.

The latter grant initiated the tribal child support program, which is still operates today.

In addition, Azbell assisted in programmatic endeavors including the Mvskoke Bow Society, MCN Challenge Bowl, updating of the MCN Code Annotated and was a founding member of the MCN Emergency Management Team.

In 2011, Azbell graduated from the Okmulgee Leadership Program and was subsequently appointed to

the Okmulgee Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors.

At this time, Azbell also served on the board for the Friends of Okmulgee State Park and served a one-year stint as president.

Azbell quickly rose through the ranks of the Chamber Board where he served as vice chairman of the executive committee and served a two-year term as the chairman/president of the board.

In April of 2013, Azbell was appointed to the Okmulgee City Council where he fulfilled an unexpired term for Ward 2.

In February 2014, Azbell was re-elected to the seat of Ward 2 for a three-year term.

In his capacity on the City Council, Azbell was nominated to be vice-mayor for 2014 and 2015.

In addition, Azbell serves on the board of directors of Okmulgee Main Street and also sits on the executive committee as the city representative.

As you can see, Azbell has been very involved with the City of Okmulgee and has forged collaborative partnerships with the local community and MCN.

In a time of limited resources and tightening budgets, collaboration is the most efficient way to move forward with strategic and comprehensive goals of the community.

The City of Okmulgee not only serves as the seat of Okmulgee County but also as the capitol of MCN.

In sum, Azbell has been an active member in the local and tribal community. As a committed and selfless public servant, Azbell seeks what is best for the citizenry and believes in the spirit of volunteerism and collaboration as a means to a positive end.

In the words of President Harry S. Truman, “It is amazing what you can accomplish if you do not care who gets the credit.”

COUNCIL

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 7

pute with the Poarch Band of Creek Indians, which is based in Alabama due to PBCI gaming development on original Muscogee (Creek) sacred grounds. MCN claims to have supported PBCI in gaining federal recognition with the understanding they would protect such lands.

• **NCA 16-030 Authorizing the expenditure of \$216,566 awarded from the U.S. Department of House and Urban Development for the tribal HUD Veterans Affairs supportive Housing HUD-VASH demonstration program. Barnett sponsored the amendment, which passed 15-0.**

U.S. Secretary of Housing and Urban Development Julian Castro announced Jan. 8 during the Inter-Tribal Council of the Five Civilized Tribes quarterly meeting, that HUD would provide new funding to assist Native American veterans who are homeless or at risk for it.

MCN is slated for \$216,566 through 20 vouchers to assist Mvskoke veterans.

• **NCA 16-032 Authorizing a \$10,040 appropriation to sponsor the United National Indian Tribal Youth 2016 National Unity Conference. Barnett sponsored the amendment, which passed 11-4 with Reps. Del Beaver, Darrell Proctor, Jennings and Jones voting against it.**

UNITY is the largest Native youth network in the country and has developed a positive reputation in empowering and serving these youth since being established in 1976.

As a sponsor, the MCN seal will be displayed throughout material for the conference and organization.

• **NCA 16-034 Authorizing a budget modification in excess of 10 percent for the MCN Department of Housing Homeownership Program fiscal year 2016 budget. Barnett sponsored the amendment, which passed 15-0.**

Housing will draw from four different line items in their budget for the Homeownership Program to cover costs for a facility to store Structurally Insulated Panels, mowing expenses for vacant lots and acquisition yards and two additional vehicles while trading in three old ones.

• **NCA 16-036 Appropriating \$782,549 to the Mound Building Oversight Committee for the second phase of the Mound Building renovation. Rep. Lucian Tiger sponsored the amendment, which passed 13-2 with Randolph and Jennings voting against it.**

Renovations were started through a prior appropriation due leaks and mold issues at the Mound. This would cover the second part of the project.

Jennings said during the meeting that he could not support it due to the state of MCN financials.

• **NCA 16-037 Authorizing a \$2,000 donation to Muskogee High School Native American Students Advocacy. Deere sponsored the amendment,**

which passed 15-0.

The organization is asking for assistance to cover their senior powwow. The total budget for it is \$5,185 and the students have raised \$1,078.01 and are planning to raise additional funds by hosting a basketball tournament.

• **NCA 16-038 Amending MCN Code Annotated Title 6, Chapter 3 titled, ‘Protection from Domestic and Family Violence Act’ and amending MCNCA Title 27 sub-sections 1-102 and 2-111 and Appendix 1, Rule 13 titled, ‘Selection of Jurors’ and amending MCNCA Title 14, Chapter 1 and 2. Barnett sponsored the amendment, which passed 15-0.**

This approves the MCN laws to implement Violence Against Women Act provisions at the Nation.

VAWA, a federal law, was reauthorized in 2013 with language allowing individual tribes to prosecute non-Native on Native sexual violence occurring on their land.

• **NCA 16-040 Authorizing an \$89,195 supplemental appropriation to the MCN Citizenship Board Office FY 2016 budget. Barnett sponsored the amendment, which was postponed indefinitely.**

Starting on page one, see more information under: ‘Council’s HEW Committee passes legislation regarding Citizenship Office.’

• **NCA 16-041 Authorizing a \$3,030.45 appropriation to repay the MCN Family Violence – Stop Violence Against Women Project. Barnett sponsored the amendment, which passed 15-0.**

There was a balance of this amount at the end of FY 2008 and an attempt was made to use the funds in FY 2011 but the U.S. Department of Justice asked for them to be returned in 2015 leaving a negative balance with the MCN Treasury that needs to be covered.

• **NCA 16-042 Authorizing the expenditure of \$23,900 for the purchase of five 30-yard solid waste containers and one 20-yard solid wasted container for the MCN Environmental Services Department. Rep. Del Beaver sponsored the amendment, which passed 15-0.**

The request for solid waste water services from ceremonial grounds and communities has grown to the point where the department would like to use their funds to purchase these containers to keep up with demand. They will bid on them through the State Contractors Buying Cooperative to save money.

• **NCA 16-043 Authorizing the expenditure of \$179,736 for the purchase of one Western Star 4700 roll-off chassis truck for the MCN Environmental Services Department. Rep. Del Beaver sponsored the amendment, which passed 15-0.**

This truck is needed to continue the solid waste services mentioned in the previous legislation. The department plans to purchase this truck

through the cooperative as well to save money.

• **NCA 16-044 Authorizing the Expenditure of \$930,894 U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Transit Administration 2016 Public Transportation on Indian Reservations Grant funds for MCN TTP. Jack sponsored the amendment, which passed 15-0.**

MCN has received the funds and needs approval for TTP to expend them.

• **NCA 16-045 Authorizing a \$93,847 appropriation to fund the costs associated with constructing a new gym floor for the Multi-Purpose Building. Tiger sponsored the amendment, which did not receive a second motion for the full vote.**

The floor would allow MCN to host sanctioned athletic events and provide a more quality base surface for the building to make it more sanitary and easy to clean as well as enhance recreational activities.

During the March 8 joint meeting of the Council Health, Education and Welfare, and Land, Natural Resources and Cultural Preservation Committees, Jennings said he could not support funding for this project due to a budget deficit at MCNDH.

The upcoming quarterly session is scheduled April 30.

Typically, eligible entities who received appropriated funds and are not MCN tribal programs, departments or other subsidiaries, are required to submit receipts to the MCN Office of the Controller within 30 days after said funds are expended or approved.

Also, legislation that begins by reading, ‘authorizing’ often grants a waiver of MCN sovereignty to incorporate the services of or to perform some other business with an external entity.

The summary of each bill is attributed to the planning session or committee agendas available on: <http://www.mcnn.com>, and the MCN Code Annotated is used as reference material, an occasionally updated version of which is available on the MCN Supreme Court website at: www.creeksupremecourt.com.

It is also based on MNN: staff interpretation, research and interviews possible: on our production schedule, through our resources and based on our experience and ability.

According to the MCN Constitution, every bill passed by the Council must be presented to the principal chief for approval before it becomes law.

The principal chief has 10 business days to sign it or return it as a veto with objections to the Council. The Council may override the veto by a two-thirds vote of the total representatives in favor of the action. If the chief neither signs it nor vetoes it, the bill becomes law after the 10-day period.

The votes for each bill are crosschecked with the agenda posted on the Council site after each session. For questions or more information contact the Council office at: 918-758-1410.

EDITORIAL DIVISION
STERLING COSPER
EDITOR
918.732.7697
SCOSPER@MCN-NSN.GOV

- Leading in the quality of Tribal newspapers
- Bimonthly publications free for all Enrolled Creek Citizens

VIDEO DIVISION
JASON SALSAMAN
MULTIMEDIA SUPERVISOR
918.732.7644
JSALSAMAN@MCN-NSN.GOV

- All-Indian news telecast airing each Saturday at 1:00pm on Tulsa's CW 12/19
- "Mvskoke Radio" radio program on KOKL 1240 AM-Wednesdays at 10:00am
- Remote and independent video production

GRAPHIC DESIGN DIVISION
JENNIFER TARYOLE
GRAPHICS SUPERVISOR
918.732.7640
JTARYOLE@MCN-NSN.GOV

- Posters
- Business Cards
- Calendars
- Wedding Invitations
- Outdoor Banners
- Programs
- Custom Decals
- Graduation Announcements
- Brochures
- Custom Logos
- Photo Enhancements

WILMA MURPHY
OFFICE MANAGER
918.732.7720
WMURPHY@MCN-NSN.GOV

Dellinger confirmed as attorney general



Native News Today
Kevin Dellinger was confirmed by a 15-0 vote during the Jan. 30 Muscogee (Creek) Nation National Council quarterly session.

New AG talks goals, roles and accomplishments

Sterling Cospers
MNN Editor

OKMULGEE, Okla. — Kevin Dellinger was nominated as Muscogee (Creek) Nation attorney general by MCN Principal Chief James Floyd. He was confirmed through TR 16-009 by a 15-0 vote during the Jan. 30 MCN National Council quarterly session.

Dellinger said he started with the tribe as assistant AG in 1996. From there, he served as MCN secretary of the Nation from 2008-2012 and then returned as assistant AG in 2012 before being confirmed as MCN AG.

He said the duty of his office is to provide legal representation for MCN as a whole.

“That involves providing legal counsel to the chief’s office, the executive branch, departments, agencies and even the Council...” Dellinger said. They can request legal counsel from us as well.”

Dellinger said this ultimately involves following the law.

“That means sometimes telling the Council we think they’re wrong,” he said. “That can mean telling the chief, ‘Hey we think you’re wrong’ as well. Really we are to protect the Nation and provide the best legal service we can.”

He explained how this is performed in instances where the two branches file legal actions on one another, such as last year when the Council Fact Finding Committee sought to question executive branch employees.

“...We just recommended that they subpoena them as the Council has the power to subpoena employees and tribal officers under the law,” Dellinger said.

Dellinger summarized the outcome of this motion.

“They got what they needed and that will, in the long run, help the Council turn around and create some better laws,” he said. “We can always improve the law and I think the outcome is that they’re going to be able to improve our laws and those laws will be for the best for the Nation...”

Read more about the case here: <http://tinyurl.com/jhu7emx>.

Dellinger said his office

is able to perform its duties in these situations based on how they are structured.

“We are an independent office of the Nation. We provide services to the chief. That’s provided for under the law, or required under the law, that when he has questions or needs any assistance, we provide that,” he said. “Also, we do that for the Council as well.”

Dellinger said this service applies within and outside of the tribe.

“We are the office that represents the Nation in all capacities. That involves going to tribal court, federal court, state court and tribal court as well,” he said. “The biggest thing we are charged with doing is protecting the sovereignty of the Nation.”

He said this is sometimes done by handing cases to external agencies such as the prosecution of former MCN Second Chief Roger Barnett, who was charged with embezzlement by the U.S. attorney for the Northern District of Oklahoma and plead guilty Oct. 9, 2014.

“I think the reason for that situation, the pretty simple reason was, we felt that was the best way to prosecute the case,” Dellinger said. “Taking a look at it, we determined that instead of going through the tribal court route, that going through the federal court would be the best way again, to protect the Nation and its assets.”

Read more about this case here: <http://tinyurl.com/h7tfuvv>.

He said his office represents the Nation in a variety of ways.

"Writing legislation, reviewing contracts, issues with children and family services, adoptions, terminations, we do just about everything," Dellinger said.

Dellinger said this variety adds enjoyment to his job.

“I always told people, working for a tribe is one of the greatest things that an attorney can do because we have to be aware of tribal law, state law, federal law, local law, common law, traditional law, so you really get to do a little bit of everything,” he said.

Dellinger expressed his excitement for one new duty in particular as his office was tasked through TR 16-026 and 027 to update the ‘MCN Code Annotated.’

“In the past, that has been the responsibility of a three-member committee and that committee was made up of the chief, the speaker and the judge of the district court,” he said. “Those are three pretty busy people and people who are hard to get together.”

Dellinger outlined his greatest goal as AG.

“I hope the biggest thing and one of the biggest impacts I can make in the office directly is customer service,” he said. “I think that is something we can always work at and always improve. I think we should always treat others the way we want to be treated.”

Haumpy confirmed as tribal administrator

Haumpy shares background, plans

Sterling Cospers
MNN Editor

OKMULGEE, Okla. — Judy Haumpy was nominated as Muscogee (Creek) Nation tribal administrator by MCN Principal Chief James Floyd.

Haumpy was confirmed through TR 16-007 by a 11-4 vote during the Jan. 30 MCN National Council quarterly session.

“...You realize that the people that didn’t vote for you represent constituents and from what I understand, their constituency didn’t approve of that so I have to acknowledge that,” she said. “I take the position that, if they don’t have faith in me, that makes me work that much harder to prove myself.”

She said this process internally is a matter of adjustment.

“In the first month, it is getting acclimated to the people and you know, personalities differ but we pretty much all have the same primary cause and it’s to work for the people,” Haumpy said.

Veterans services director confirmed for third term

Davis reflects, discusses developments, praises staff and clients

Sterling Cospers
MNN Editor

OKMULGEE, Okla. — Muscogee (Creek) Nation Veterans Affairs Service Office Director Ken Davis was confirmed in his position for a third time through TR 16-006. MCN Principal Chief James Floyd nominated Davis who was approved 15-0 during the Jan. 30 MCN National Council quarterly session.

Davis has led MCN VASO from the beginning.

“This office actually opened September 2004 under the leadership of Principal Chief A.D. Ellis and of course the National Council,” he said. “So the first day on the job was September 2004 and we’ve been going strong and it’s been absolutely phenomenal.”

He shared their purpose.

“The main goal, the main thrust here is to secure earned benefits and services for our Mvskoke veterans,” Davis said. “We absolutely help them out in their claim for service connected, non-service connected benefits. Help them get into the medical system of the veterans administration and just trying to do everything we can for our veterans.”

Davis is a major of the U.S. Marine Corps Reserves where he served seven years, according to his biography submitted to the ‘Muscogee Nation News.’

He also served four years active duty in the U.S. Marine Corps and fought in the Kuwait War in 1991.

He is of the Kecopatakv Tribal Town and Raccoon

ple,” Haumpy said.

Haumpy explained how she has done this while moving up in the tribe, applying what she learned from her first position as food nutrition specialist starting in 1982.

“...At that time I was with them, we were out in the snow, we were out in the rain, sleet, hot sun and I thought it was very embarrassing to be behind the truck handing out to our people and I thought, ‘This could be my aunt, my grandmother. This could be my relatives’ and I was very embarrassed by that,” she said.

Later on, Haumpy said she got approval while working under former MCN Principal Chief Perry Beaver, to apply for a grant from the Indian Health Service, which was matched by the Council to build the MCN Food Distribution Center in Okmulgee.

“It was a great stride to know that people could drive up now and drive up under the awning and be protected from the elements,” she said.

Haumpy said she plans to work on streamlining tribal services through her new position.

“Make them accessible by perhaps using our Internet,” she said. “By posting more

things on the Internet so they know what’s available.”

Haumpy outlined some of her other duties.

“It entails small things like overseeing a budget, helping someone correct a budget in addition to trying to find, our tribe is growing so large that we are running out of room,” she said.

She said this is a challenge as the tribe continues to grow.

“So as a result of that, we’re looking at trying to find offices for our staff because we’re pretty much sitting on each other and we need more buildings,” Haumpy said.

Haumpy said organizing to accommodate expansion also factors in.

“That was something that was mentioned this morning when we were talking, was trying to organize our campus so that we would have construction all in one area,” she said.

She expressed optimism towards being able to address these issues.

“I feel like we’re going to make good strides in this administration,” Haumpy said. “I feel like there’s always room for improvement and that means we’re constantly looking at ways for our Nation to grow.”

Clan.

Davis recognized a fellow veteran as a valued VASO consultant.

“Joe Taylor is a decorated combat veteran from the Vietnam War in the U.S. Marines, 3rd Marine Division,” he said. “Unbelievably valued counselor, advisor, a highly intelligent individual and he’s non-bureaucratic and not politically correct I might add and that adds a lot to everything.”

Taylor recently assisted in a meeting to iron out details of a \$216,566 U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development grant to help MCN house homeless Mvskoke veterans.

“Again, there’s 20 vouchers only for Mvskoke veterans,” Davis said “So what we do is, we go and assist these veterans that are homeless or are about to be on the verge of homelessness.”

Davis said VASO has eight veterans lined up.

“The U.S. government awarded this grant but the money is still making its way down here,” he said.

He also recognized former VASO staff.

“Of course we all remember Mrs. Fannie Barnett,” Davis said. “Unfortunately, we lost her July 20, 2010 and we think about her every single day. Mrs. Barnett, you are absolutely missed.”

Davis showed appreciation for current VASO employees.

“I work with two fine people, Miss Chelsie Dickerson who is our operations officer,” he said. “She’s young, learning quite fast actually. Then I work with Mr. Shawn Taryole.”

Davis said Taryole has worked with him for eight years.

“I think the world of Shawn. I trust him. The veterans trust him and he operates from the standpoint of ‘it’s all about you, never about me,’ ” he said.

He acknowledged the role of current and former MCN leadership at VASO.

“There is a strong relationship between our tribal administration, our Council and its veterans,” Davis said.

Davis pointed out how VASO is a leader.

“I would really use our tribe as a nationwide example,” he said. “This is a tribal veterans entity. What can be done?”

He commented on the passage of free press legislation at MCN last year.

“We watched that episode very intently on that one because it is a free press,” Davis said. “We view it as this, the day our press is muzzled is the day we’re no longer free. A muzzled press is nothing but a slave so no, that will not be tolerated.”

Davis believes children are also a priority and shared a recent experience where he went along to read at the MCN daycare in Sapulpa for Dr. Seuss Day.

“Actually, we called veterans and they’re planning to rotate and we plan to hit every single one of our daycares once a month,” he said. “Being around these two, three, four-year-old children, our babies, that’s what it’s all about. That’s exactly why we did what we had to do and wanted to do.”

He shared an appreciation for his job as a whole.

“Working with this staff, still to this day I still get butterflies coming into work,” Davis said. “Because, one, I know what I get to do, I get to work with our men and women here.”

Widows support group camp set April 15-16

ECHOIMedia Release

OKMULGEE, Okla. — The ECHO widows support group has set the Camp ECHO 2016 event for April 15-16 at The Rowe Family Center, 8th and Seminole in Okmulgee across from the jail.

The event will feature four workshops for: basket making, jewelry, quilting and a one-on-one session on widowhood.

All Native widows are invited for free and non-Widows are as well and will be charged \$25 for admission a T-shirt and lunch.

To register, call Nancy Deere at: 918-756-4272.

REVIVAL SET FOR APRIL 1-3

OKEMAH, Okla. — A revival led by evangelist Edward Bear is set April 1-3 at Montesoma Baptist Church, 96119 N. 3790 Rd., Okemah, OK 74859.

Services start at: 7 p.m., April 1-2 and 11 a.m., April 3.

For more information call: 918-623-9126.

UPDATE

Mvskoke language camp set June 13-17

MCN MLPPIMedia Release

HULBERT, Okla. — The Mvskoke Language Preservation Program is coordinating a Mvskoke language immersion camp June 13-17 at Sequoyah State Park in Hulbert. Applicants must be enrolled Muscogee (Creek) and entering the seventh-12th grades. For applications, which are due March 31, email: jmontiel@mcn-nsn.gov.

MLPP can be reached at: 918-732-7724.

TCIC SPRING FLING SET APRIL 2

TULSA, Okla. — The Tulsa Creek Indian Community, 8611 S. Union Ave, Tulsa, OK 74132, has set a Spring Fling event April 2 from 8 a.m. - 3 p.m.

For more information call: 918-298-2464.



POWWOW SET FOR APRIL 2

MUSKOGEE, Okla. — The 11th annual Azalea Powwow is set April 2 and will be hosted by Fife Indian United Methodist Church at the Civic Center Arena in Muskogee.

The event will begin with a gourd dance at 2 p.m., dinner is at 5 p.m. and grand entry is at 7 p.m.

Admission is \$3 and free for children six and under.

For information including more events and vendor details call: 918-816-1498.

DAY OF PRAYER EVENT SET APRIL 2

OKMULGEE, Okla. — A National Day of Prayer event is set April 2 from 10 a.m. - 1 p.m. at the Mvskoke Dome in Okmulgee.

All Muscogee (Creek) citizens are invited.

For more information call: 918-282-9381.

WILD ONION DINNER SET APRIL 9

OKMULGEE, Okla. — Little Cussetah United Methodist Church has set an all-you-can-eat wild onion dinner for April 9 from 11 a.m. - 2 p.m.

Dinners are \$10 for adults and carry out and \$5 for children 12 and under.

For more information call Karen King at: 918-652-5356.

ELDERS' REUNION DINNER SET APRIL 16

WETUMKA, Okla. — A Thlopthlocco Creek Tribal Town elder's reunion dinner is set 4:30 p.m., April 16 at the AQ community building, Hwy 27 northwest of Wetumka.

For more information call: 405-220-5887.



GOSPEL SINGING SET MAY 6

OKMULGEE, Okla. — A gospel singing has been set 7 p.m., May 6 for Rufus Gould's birthday at Crosstown Pentecostal Church. 1206 W. 5th street in Okmulgee.

All are welcome to the event, which will also feature cake and coffee as well as concessions, the funds from which will go towards sending the youth to camp.

SPRING MARKET SET FOR MAY 6

OKMULGEE, Okla. — The Mvskoke Loan Fund has set a Spring Market for May 6 from 11 a.m. - 3 p.m. at the Claude Cox Omniplex outdoor pavilion in Okmulgee.

It will include Native American vendors, the Okmulgee County Farmer's Market and Jo Jo's BBQ.

To request transit offered for employees and Okmulgee elderly housing call Kogee Spanaird at: 918-732-7908.

DALLAS

— Josephine Birdcreek Gomez was born April 20, 1937 in Weleetka, Okla., and passed away Dec. 10, 2015 in Dallas.

She was preceded in death by her: parents, Roman and Susie West Birdcreek; sister, Marie Birdcreek Thompson and her extended family and grandson, John Michael Svitak.

She is survived by her: husband of 57 years, Rudolph Gomez Sr. of Dallas; son, Rudolph Gomez Jr. and spouse, Darla Gomez of Allen; daughter, Carmen Gomez Svitak and spouse, Michael Svitak of Dewey, Okla., and grandson Matthew T. Gomez of Dallas.

She leaves behind her: sister, Amanda Birdcreek Soap of Farmers Branch; brother, Carven Birdcreek of Whitewater, Ariz.; grandchildren, Audrey Svitak Royal and husband, Russell, Jessie A. Svitak and wife, Ofelia; great-grandchildren Liberty Svitak, Iceo Svitak, Jurnie Svitak, Hazel Svitak, Kaira Coleman, Kaylen Coleman, Kaden Coleman and Kamden Svitak a number of cousins, nieces and nephews as well as many family, extended family and friends.

Family received friends Dec. 14, 2015 at Dallas Indian United Methodist Church.

Service was held Dec. 15, 2015 at Restland Funeral Home.

Funeral arrangements were entrusted to Restland Funeral Home and Memorial Park, 13005 Greenville Avenue, Dallas, TX 75243.

Mvskoke Language Preservation Program

EM MONKV – Nature

KVNHLWE - Hill

ETO - Tree

HVSE - Sun

ETO OFV - Forest

AKHVSSE RAKKO - Lake

CVTO - Rock

PVHE - Grass

TOTKV - Fire

KOLASWV - Star

OKTAHV - Sand

PVKPVKUCE - Flower

HVRESSE - Moon

KVNHLWE RVKKO - Mountain

OWV - Water

K E O A K H V S S E R V K K O K O O

V K E O E A T O T K V E O W V V K L

K A S T V E T O P E T O O F C V E E

R V K R O K O P P V V V E H K L V E

K V N H A O V V K V K A T T V H K E

H V V H V A F T T O K P C V T O V L

E T O K V S L V H K V P V L O C N O

K O E E V L S O O T H N V K L T H V

E K V K V N W E V A V R S K K V V S

O K T A H A H E R H S V S C K U L O

L P V T V V K V R V E V V H V U C O

P T V P R K O O L V K K T R K L C E

V S E N E U L E T W K O L A S W V K

H E O O S K A K E T E K O L A S W K

E R K K E H F L R V H V O V F K V O

CHILOCCO REUNION SET MAY 26-29

NEWKIRK, Okla. — A reunion for the Chilocco class of 1966 is set May 26-29 at the First Council Casino in Newkirk and the Chilocco campus.

To register call Emma Jean Falling at: 918-266-1626. For more information call Clarence Johnson at: 918-752-9512.

FORMER MCN ROYALTY SOUGHT

OKMULGEE, Okla. — The Muscogee (Creek) Nation Scholarship Pageant Committee is seeking former MCN royalty to take part in this year's Honoring Past Princesses event. Those interested may contact Terrie Anderson at: 918-732-7699, tanderson@mcn-nsn.gov or Terra Beaver at: 918-758-9769, tbeaver@mcn-nsn.gov.

IN THE DISTRICT COURT OF THE MUSCOGEE (CREEK) NATION
OKMULGEE DISTRICT

IN THE MATTER OF:

N.A., DOB: 12-24-2014

Alleged Deprived Child.

Case No. JV-2016-01

JUVENILE SUMMONS

THE MUSCOGEE NATION to:

Robert Atkins, Natural Father to N.A.
Unknown
Unknown

YOU ARE HEREBY NOTIFIED that a Petition has been filed in the Court of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation alleging that the above-named child is a deprived child and that, as the parent of said child, you have been named as the Respondent, all as more fully set out in the Petition.

YOU ARE THEREFORE ORDERED TO APPEAR at the Courtroom of the District Court of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation, Okmulgee, Oklahoma, on the 3rd day of June, 2016 at the hour of 9 : 00 a.m. for an Adjudication Hearing and to there remain subject to the call of the Court until discharged so that you may be advised of the allegations and may answer that you admit or deny the allegations of the Deprived Petition.

You may seek the advice of any attorney on any matter relating to this action at your own expense. Or, if you are qualified as indigent, an attorney can be appointed for you.

IF YOU FAIL TO ATTEND THIS HEARING, YOUR PARENTAL RIGHTS MAY BE ADVERSELY AFFECTED AND YOU MAY BE CITED FOR CONTEMPT OF COURT AND A BENCH WARRANT MAY BE ISSUED FOR YOUR ARREST.

Issued this 17 day of March 2016.

[Seal]

Deputy Court Clerk
Muscogee (Creek) Nation District Court

MUSCOGEE (CREEK) NATION
STATE OF OKLAHOMA OKMULGEE COUNTY
The undersigned hereby certifies this instrument to be a full, true and correct copy of the original, as the same appears on the record in the District Court Records.
Witness this 17 day of March 2016
Court Clerk



April and spring brings election things

Highland Park
Non-citizen submission

OKMULGEE, Okla. — It is a fact that older citizens are the most likely to consistently cast their votes, which lends them some political clout.

“Seniors have a vested interest in protecting valuable benefits received from the government. The age based Social Security and Medicare programs create somewhat of an identity to seniors and a basis for mobilization.” — Andrea Louise Campbell, MIT.

“The voter registration process may be another reason that seniors vote in greater numbers. Seniors tend to be more stable in where they live, younger voters are more mobile.” —Leonard Steinhorn, American University

Younger adults have more things to accomplish and may overlook registering.

Retirees have more time to participate in politics whereas, working age voters have time and job constraints when getting to the polls.

Retirees may also have more disposable income for campaign contributions. Years of experience to develop communication skills allow them more confidence in contacting politicians.

The Silent Generation seniors were socialized in an era when voting was viewed as a privilege. They have also experienced or served in several wars that impressed upon them the importance of foreign relations and military strength. Anyone remember the bomb drills at school under the desks?

Older Americans are more traditional and identify strongly with a political party, often upon familial lines. They tend to be more conservative, especially on social issues.

In the 2014 elections, Republicans faired best among older voters. Men seemed to vote Republican more than women. Women were more equally divided between parties. Republicans gained among white evangelical Christians. The number of independents is growing in this group (PEW Research).

Regardless of how you vote, who you vote for, or your age demographic, let us consider what a privilege this is and how many have fought to gain us this right. A personal note, even if some candidates appear to have forgotten what the word integrity means, let us proceed with our civic duty.

Rock Creek - Table Games - Electronic Games

This facility is regulated by the Muscogee (Creek) Nation Office of Public Gaming

Saturday, April 16th

NOON - 8:00PM

GRILZ gone WILD

Complimentary BBQ sandwich and chips beginning at 11:00AM until supplies last. Must be a Diamond Club member.

\$5 Match Play

Hot Seat Blitz Free Play Drawings

Ten (10) - \$10 Free Play hot seat drawings at the Main Casino and Travel Plaza every 30 minutes from NOON - 8:00PM. You may win multiple \$10 hot seats.

Hot Seat Grill Drawings

One (1) \$500 cash prize and grill drawing every 30 minutes from NOON - 8:00PM.

Saturday, April 30th

NOON - 5:00PM

Travel Plaza

13th ANNIVERSARY

Saturday, April 23rd

NOON - 8:00PM

Choco-Luck

Saturday

\$5 Match Play

Hot Seat Blitz Free Play Drawings

Ten (10) - \$10 Free Play hot seat drawings at the Main Casino and Travel Plaza every 30 minutes from NOON - 8:00PM. You may win multiple \$10 hot seats.

Hot Seat Wheel Spin Drawings

One (1) hot seat drawing every 30 minutes from NOON - 8:00PM for a chance to spin the prize wheel.

Prize Wheel

Prizes:

\$250

\$500

\$1,000

\$5,000

\$13 Match Play

Hot Seat Blitz Free Play Drawings

Thirteen (13) - \$13 Free Play hot seat drawings at the Main Casino or Travel Plaza every 30 minutes from NOON - 5:00PM. You may win multiple \$13 hot seats.

Electronic Ticket Drawings

One (1) electronic drawing ticket with every 100 points earned from April 1 - 30.

One (1) \$500 cash electronic ticket drawing every 30 minutes from NOON - 5:00PM.

CREEK NATION Casino

MUSCOGEE

3420 W. Peak Blvd. Muskogee OK 74401

Like us on Facebook! "MCNcasino"

Follow us on twitter! "MCNcasino"

www.creeknationcasino.net

Picking Wild Onions

by: Jamie Rolland
Spread and photos by: Chelsie Rich

It all started when I was a little girl. The best memory I have was when I was about five-years-old. I remember my mom, brother Bubba, aunt Margaret, my two cousins Juanita and Stephanie and my dad. We would load up, go to Mohawk Park and spend the day picking onions.

After we found enough, we went to my aunt's to clean the onions, cut them up and have dinner that evening. That's when it all started for me. Picking onions. I never picked them when I was younger, due the fact that I didn't want to get dirty.

One afternoon when I was about eight, maybe nine-years-old, I remember sitting around the house with my mom. We weren't doing anything, just sitting around.

She asked if I wanted to go pick onions. I asked her, "where?" I remember her going into the kitchen and grabbing two knives. We got into the car and drove out to Heyburn Lake right outside my hometown, Kellyville. We didn't say much going out there, just rode with the windows rolled down and the smell of fresh air and the bacon sandwiches she had prepared for us to snack on.

We spent that whole afternoon picking onions and talking. It was at that moment, I realized how relaxing and nice it was just to sit and talk to my mom. To hear her stories of when she grew up, how she picked and cleaned onions with her family. I never liked cleaning onions but I sure loved picking them.

That was always the easy part to me. Cutting into the grass and going through the dirt to get to that fresh onion. When I first started picking, I used to get the garlic and onions mixed up. My mom had to tell me how to get the right kind.

She always told me that if an onion has a big head, it is going to be tough and takes a little longer to cook. When we finished picking onions, she always soaked them for a few hours so they would be a little easier to clean.

Picking onions to me is just a relaxing thing to do. Thinking about life, older ones that have gone on, it really gives you time to be alone with your thoughts. Although I like my alone time, I miss picking onions with my momma and just listening to her talk and tell me her stories.

